15.4 Marine Ecosystems

KEY CONCEPT

Marine ecosystems are global.
The ocean can be divided into zones.

- Ocean zones can be determined by their distance from shoreline and water depths.
  - intertidal zone—between low and high tide
  - neritic zone—from intertidal zone to continental shelf
  - bathyal zone—from neritic zone to base of continental shelf
  - abyssal zone—lies below 2000 m
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- The neritic zone harbors more biomass than any other zone.
- Plankton make up most of the biomass.
  - zooplankton
  - phytoplankton
Coastal waters contain unique habitats.

- Coral reefs are found in warm waters.
  - tropical climate zone
  - great amount of biomass
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- Kelp forests are found in cold, nutrient-rich waters.
  - large communities of seaweed
  - great amount of biomass